

## Message Text

SECRET

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21

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 OMB-01

NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /071 W

----- 126337

O 210916Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2026

INFO SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

JCS

CINCPAC

S E C R E T SINGAPORE 0711

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MARR, MPOL, SN, NZ, UK

SUBJECT: APPROXIMATE TIMETABLE FOR WITHDRAWAL OF BRITISH MILITARY  
FORCES FROM SINGAPORE

REFS;&A. SINGAPORE 0671; B. USDAO SINGAPORE 200803Z;

C. STATE 039185

SUMMARY: UK MOD TEAM HAS COMPLETED DISCUSSIONS WITH GOS OFFICIALS  
RE PHASE OUT OF UK FORCES FROM SINGAPORE. PLANS CALLING FOR

WITHDRAWAL

OF MOST UK FORCES BY END OF 1975 AND ALL FORCES BY MARCH 31, 1976

SHOULD RECEIVE FINAL STAMP OF APPROVAL IN LONDON WITHIN TEN DAYS.

POSSIBILITY OF GNZ MANAGEMENT OF CERTAIN NAVAL BASIN BERTHS DISCUSSED  
WITH GOS SENIOR OFFICIALS WHO INDICATED GOS WOULD MANAGE BASIN  
ITSELF AND MAKE BERTHS SIX AND SEVEN AVAILABLE ON PREFERRED BASIS  
TO UK, AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND U.S. WARSHIPS. GOS WILL ALSO

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MANAGE FUEL DEPOT AND LEASE STORAGE SPACE TO UK WHICH CAN SUB-

LEASE TO U.S. NAVY. EMBASSY DOES NOT BELIEVE INITIAL GOS REJECTION  
AT SENIOR OFFICIALS LEVEL OF RNZN MANAGEMENT OF NAVAL BASIN BERTHS  
SHOULD ALTER IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION OF REF C INSTRUCTIONS. END  
SUMMARY.

1. UK DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER WATTS INFORMED DCM FEBRUARY 20 THAT  
BRITISH MOD TEAM HAD COMPLETED DISCUSSIONS WITH GOS OFFICIALS AND  
WERE RETURNING TO LONDON WITH FIRM PLANS TO PHASE OUT UK FORCES.  
ACCORDIFN DAO INFO (SEE PARA 2(A) REF (B)) THESE PLANS WILL BE FINAL-  
IZED IN LONDON WITHIN TEN DAYS. GOS REPRESENTATIVES AT TALKS WERE  
PERMSEC MINDEF PANG TEE POW AND PERMSEC MINISTRY OF LAW AND NATIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT K. R. CHANDRA.

2. WATTS SAID WITHDRAWAL OF BRITISH FORCES WOULD BEGIN IN JULY AND  
THAT ALL REPEAT ALL FORCES WOULD BE WITHDRAWN BY MARCH 31, 1976  
AT THE LATEST. MOST WOULD BE GONE BY END OF CY '75. APPROXIMATE  
TIMETABLE AS FOLLOWS:

A. LONG-DISTANCE RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT (NIMRODS) WOULD LEAVE  
IN JULY OR AUGUST.

B. FRIGATE WOULD DEPART IN SEPTEMBER.

C. RE-ENFORCED ARMY BATTALION (GORDON HIGHLANDERS) WOULD BEGIN  
PULLING OUT IN OCTOBER AND WOULD BE ALL GONE BY END OF DECEMBER  
OR POSSIBLY JANUARY 1976 AT VERY LATEST.

D. RUN-DOWN OF PERSONNEL AT NAVAL BASIN WOULD MEAN THAT BY AUGUST  
THE ROYAL NAVY WOULD NO LONGER BE ABLE TO ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITIES  
FOR HANDLING NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIPS. NAVAL BASIN WOULD BE  
TURNED OVER COMPLETELY TO GOS BY DECEMBER 1975 OR JANUARY 1976.

E. OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF SENOKO FUEL FARM WOULD BE TURNED  
OVER TO GOS SOMETIME THIS YEAR, BUT ROYAL NAVY WOULD LEASE  
BACK WL OF THE 19 OIL STORAGE TANKS FOR ITS OWN AND ALLIED  
(INCLUDING U.S.) USE. IF U.S. WANTED TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL STORAGE  
THIS WAS PROBABLY NEGOTIABLE. GOS HAD INFORMED MOD TEAM THAT  
IT WOULD ADVISE UK BY APRIL WHICH GOS STATUTORY BOARD WOULD  
MANAGE THE FUEL FARM. PSA, PUBLIC UTILITY BOARD, SINGAPORE PETROLEUM  
CORPORATION AND POSSIBLY PRIVATE OIL COMPANIES WERE ALL UNDER  
CONSIDERATION.

3. WATTS NOTED THEY HAD DISCUSSED WITH GOS POSSIBILITY OF NEW  
ZEALAND NAVY MANAGING BERTHS SIX AND SEVEN IN NAVAL BASIN, BUT GOS  
REPS HAD SHOWN NO INTEREST AND ADVISED THAT EITHER PORT OF SINGAPORE  
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AUTHORITY (PSA) OR SEMBAWANG SHIPYARD (SSY) WOULD ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY  
FOR THE BASIN, AND THAT FINAL DECISION AS TO WHICH STATUTORY  
BOARD WOULD BE GIVEN THIS RESPONSIBILITY WOULD BE MADE BY APRIL.  
GOS ALSO ADVISED THAT BERTHS SIX AND SEVEN IN THE NAVAL BASIN WOULD  
BE MADE AVAILABLE AT REASONABLE RENTAL CHARGE TO WARSHIPS OF FPDA  
POWERS AND U.S. ON A PREFERRED BASIS ASSUMING ADEQUATE NOTICE.  
ADEQUATE NOTICE WAS DEFINED AS BEING IN ACCORDANCE WITH REGULAR  
DIPLOMATIC PRACTICE (THIS MEANS APPROXIMATELY ONE MONTH NOTICE).

WHEN ASKED ABOUT EMERGENCIES, GOS OFFICIALS SAID THEY WOULD DO THEIR BEST TO BE ACCOMMODATING.

4. WATTS EXPRESSED OPINION PSA WOULD PROBABLY WIN OUT IN STRUGGLE TO GAIN CONTROL OF THIS VALUABLE PROPERTY BECAUSE DIRECTOR OFSUSA, HOWE YOON CHONG, MUCH MORE INFLUENTIAL THAN MANAGEMENT OF SSY. WATTS WAS DOUBTFUL WHETHER POLITICAL FACTORS MILITATING IN FAVOR OF GNZ MANAGEMENT OF BERTHS SIX AND SEVEN AT THE BASIN HAD BEEN FULLY CONSIDERED AT HIGHEST POLITICAL LEVEL IN GOS, AND BELIEVED THIS DECISION MIGHT BE REVERSED IF U.S. AND GNZ MADE STRONG PITCH TO DR. GOH OR PRIME MINISTER LEE.

5. DESPITE INITIAL GOS REJECTION AT SENIOR OFFICIALS LEVEL OF GNZ MANAGEMENT OF BERTHS SIX AND SEVEN, WE DO NOT BELIEVE THIS SHOULD AFFECT IMMEDIATE IMPLEMENTATION INSTRUCTIONS SET FORTH REF C. U.S. WILLINGNESS TO UNDERWRITE SUBSTANTIAL PORTION OF OPERATING COSTS MAY INCREASE GNZ AND GOS RECEPTRIVITY TO PROPOSAL THAT GNZ MANAGE BOTH FUEL DEPOT AND RELATED SHIP BERTHS. FUEL DEPOT IS USED PRIMARILY BY WARSHIPS AND, UNLIKE THE NAVAL BASIN, THERE IS  
CONSIDERABLE  
DOUBT WHETHER IT CAN BE PROFITABLY OPERATED ON A COMMERCIAL BASIS.  
IF GNZ PREPARED TO OPERATE THE FUEL DEPOT, GOS MIGHT BE MORE WILLING TO ALLOW IT TO MANAGE THE RELATED BERTHS AT THE NAVAL BASIN.  
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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** TROOP DEPLOYMENT, POLICIES, MILITARY BASES, FUELING SYSTEMS  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 21 FEB 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Drafter:** n/a  
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**Reference:** 75 SINGAPORE 0671, 75 USDAO SINGAPORE 200803Z  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
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**Review Date:** 30 JUN 2003  
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**Subject:** APPROXIMATE TIMETABLE FOR WITHDRAWAL OF BRITISH MILITARY FORCES FROM SINGAPORE  
**TAGS:** MARR, MPOL, SN, NZ, UK, US  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006